



National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

A Semi-Annual Progress Report
on
Election Support to East Timor
USAID Grant No. 497-G-00-01-00015-00

For the period of
March 21, 2001 to September 30, 2001

Amount of Grant:	\$ 919,978
Total Value of Program:	\$ 919,978
Funds received this period:	\$ 288,419
Expenditures this period:	\$ 288,419
Balance due under the Grant:	\$ 631,559
Total of other contributions (non-USAID) this period:	Not Applicable

Table of Contents

Narrative	
I. Summary	2
II. Program Objectives	2
III. Program Activities	3
A. Civic Forum East Timor	3
B. Code of Conduct	4
C. Candidate Forums	5
D. Coordination with other USAID grantees	6
Purpose and Policy-Level Impact	7
I. Civic and Voter Education	7
II. Political Party Development and Leadership Development	8
Analysis of Impact	8
Appendices	
Appendix I	
NDI Civic Forum Discussion Module 1	
Rule Setting, Elements of Democracy and Individual Rights	
Appendix II	
NDI Civic Forum Discussion Module 2	
Democratic Elections in East Timor	
Appendix III	
NDI Civic Forum Discussion Module 3	
Constitution of East Timor	
Appendix IV	
How To Organize A Candidate Forum	
Appendix V	
Civic Forum in East Timor Handout on the Constitution	
Appendix VI	
Tips for organizing meetings between Civic Forum members	
and Constituent Assembly members to discuss constitutional issues	
Appendix VII	
Pact of National Unity	

EAST TIMOR: ELECTION SUPPORT
USAID Cooperative Agreement No. 497-G-00-01-00015-00
Semi-Annual Progress Report
For the period of March 21, 2001 to September 30, 2001

NARRATIVE

I. SUMMARY

In March 2001, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) approved NDI's proposal to support the electoral preparations in East Timor through a democracy assistance program focused on civic education on election processes and constitutional development and, to a lesser extent, political-party building. During the reporting period, NDI initiated and implemented Civic Forum East Timor (CFET), a participatory grassroots civic education program that builds sustained citizen participation in political processes. Through a nation-wide series of community level discussions, Timorese facilitators work with existing Timorese community-based organizations to expand citizen knowledge of basic democratic principles and practices and to empower citizens and communities to be more politically active. NDI has conducted a preliminary training of facilitators, and discussion groups have been formed and held in several districts. CFET participants have engaged in discussion modules on democracy, the Constituent Assembly elections, and constitutional development. The Institute has also worked with the territory's interim officials, political party leaders and civic society leaders to advance the discussion of an electoral code of conduct, and to promote the hosting of candidate forums in preparation for the August 30 Constituent Assembly elections.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In addressing the critical need to prepare the East Timorese people for active participation in the country's nascent political life, NDI seeks to implement a program in East Timor to meet the following objectives:

- To expand citizen knowledge and understanding of basic democratic concepts and encourage the development of an aware and active citizenship through participatory grassroots civic education; and
- To facilitate the active and informed participation of East Timorese political parties in multi-party dialogue in support of competitive peaceful elections, political tolerance, and a democratic electoral process.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A. Civic Forum East Timor

Establishing CFET

To initiate Civic Forum, NDI identified and recruited facilitators by working with local organizations active and experienced in civic education. In the initial phase, the Institute established cooperative agreements with the Commission for Justice and Peace (CJP) in the Baucau Diocese to cover the eastern districts of Baucau; and with OPJLATIL, a youth movement, to work in Aileu, Dili, Ermera and Liquica. NDI conferred with the Working Group on Voter Education (KKPP), the Los Palos-based NGO TILMO to cover Lautem and FFSO, a local NGO, to cover Oecusse. In the second phase, which began in early September, the Institute expanded its relationship with CJP Baucau to cover Manututo and Baucau and replace the TILMO team in Lautem that had resigned. Local NGOs in Bobonaro, Cova-Lima, Ainaro & Manufahi were used as the starting points for finding facilitators in the remaining districts. The approach of collaborating with local civic society organizations was very effective in countering the prevalent criticism from the local NGO community and the perceived lack of Timorese involvement in past UNTAET civic education initiatives, and in surmounting the challenges of the recruitment process brought about by the lack of road access, poor radio service, and low newspaper readership.

First Training for CFET Facilitators

The first training for CFET facilitators was conducted from June 12 to 15 at the NDI office in Dili. The 16 participants in attendance represented the districts of Aileu, Baucau, Dili, Ermera, Liquica, Los Palos and Oecusse; and held a broad range of experience from involvement in religious, NGO, political, socio-civic and women organizations. In addition to NDI's Dili based staff, Jim Della-Giacoma and Tarikul Ghani, the training was conducted by Bambang Hari Danukusumo, a trainer involved in The Institute's focus group research program in East Timor in February 2000; and NDI's DC-based senior advisor for civic participation, Aaron Azelton. The four-day training included discussions on the basic premises of democracy, the development of facilitator skills, the political process in East Timor, the role of political parties and the constitution, and the crafting of a mission statement and work plans. The training ended with each facilitator signing an agreement to work with Civic Forum and commit to fulfilling a duty statement as a facilitator.

Follow-up Meetings and Field Visits

After the first CFET training, NDI held a series of follow-up meetings with all the facilitator teams. These meetings have been instrumental in receiving feedback on the discussion guides, and in monitoring the reporting process designed for facilitators. The response to Civic Forum discussion groups in the districts has been largely positive. Participants differentiated Civic Forum from other civic education mediums, particularly mass meetings and pamphlet drops. One facilitator quoted a participant as saying that past

regular civic education sessions meant sitting en masse and listening; Civic Forum gave them a chance, for the first time, to speak.

By the end of September 2001, CFET facilitators had conducted 227 discussion groups with a cumulative attendance of 3,792, most thought to be attending the groups on multiple occasions. During September 2001 itself, 83 discussion groups were held in the operational districts, involving 1,408 participants; 60 percent of the participants are male and 40 percent female. 30 percent of participants are between the ages of 17 and 25; 38 percent are between 26 and 35; 27 percent are between 36 and 45; and 5 percent are 46 and older. CFET participants are not easily classified but they are drawn from various types of organized groups in East Timor such as church groups, youth, women's groups, craft cooperatives, farming groups, fishing collectives and sports associations. They are not readily identifiable with any one political party or NGO, though anecdotal evidence suggests some local party activists do take part in CFET discussion groups. Most participants are not directly involved in party politics. During the reporting period, CFET intensively covered three discussion modules: the facilitators took the first module on democracy to the field in July; the second module, which focused on the Constituent Assembly elections, was engaged in August; and the third module, on constitutional development, was brought to field in September.

For the month of September, NDI actively recruited new facilitators in the districts where CFET has yet to begin operations or where activities have been deferred. New facilitators have also been selected to continue activities in the district of Lautem, where CFET facilitators had resigned due to conflicting commitments. A combination of serious illness and the removal of a facilitator due to political party activity led to the temporary suspension of the program in the Ermera district. The removal of two more facilitators for conducting political party activities in Dili and Aileu did not disrupt the program in these districts. A training course for new facilitators was held October 22 to 25, 2001, and the new facilitators are expected to be in the field beginning November 1.

B. Code of Conduct

The political context surrounding the development of a code of conduct in East Timor shaped NDI's response in this program area. At the commencement of the grant, the CNRT, the sole East Timorese coalition umbrella group, had already taken a public stance that it would draft a Pact of National Unity to control the behavior of its members after the dissolution of the coalition just before the beginning of the campaign period. Initial informal approaches to political parties determined that the parties themselves were looking to the CNRT leadership to develop this pact, or to UNTAET to produce a legally binding code of conduct rather than developing a self-enforcing code.

In May, NDI met with Cabinet Member for Economics, Mari Alkatiri to open discussions on how the Institute can work with political parties on establishing a code of conduct. Alkatiri, who is also the first vice-general coordinator of the FRETILIN Presidential Council, had been given the task of drafting the Pact. However, at the time of the primary meetings between NDI and Alkatiri, heavy negotiations between East Timor

and Australia involving Timor Sea oil rights had distracted his attention from the drafting process of the Pact.

In an effort both to stimulate the discussion on political party codes of conduct and to help East Timorese political parties develop and gain criteria on political party code formation, NDI translated into Bahasa Indonesia a number of sample codes of conduct from Namibia, Mali, Bangladesh & Zimbabwe. These were then distributed in English and Indonesian to UNTAET Civic Education Unit members and senior party officials. The CNRT disbanded in June without having completed the Pact, and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (OSRSG) took up this task in early July. NDI distributed its code of conduct materials to both the OSRSG and UNTAET Political Affairs.

NDI was approached by the UNTAET Civic Education team in Viqueque regarding their discussions with political parties on a local code. NDI held discussions with this team, provided them with translations of a number of codes of conduct and offered to travel to Viqueque to discuss codes of conduct further upon their request and the request of the parties. The development of a local code resulted from these discussions.

In early July, 14 of the 16 registered political parties agreed to and signed the Pact of National Unity, an accord drafted by the parties themselves that committed signatories to “respect” the results of the Constituent Assembly election on August 30, to “disseminate the practice of non-violence in relations between political parties”, and appealed to party members and the population at large not to resort to physical or verbal aggression and to promote an orderly campaign. NDI took the initiative to assist in propagating the Pact in the hope of promoting a peaceful election campaign. NDI had 2,000 copies of the Pact of National Unity printed in Tetum, the dominant local dialect, and distributed through its network of Civic Forum discussion groups in seven districts during the month of August. For the majority of the recipients of these copies, it was their first time to see a published copy of the document, as newspaper circulation in East Timor is very low.

C. Candidate Forums

In preparing for constituent assembly elections, Civic Forum East Timor (CFET) heavily engaged in conducting and moderating candidate forums. These forums gave CFET members and the general East Timorese public the opportunity to meet and interact with district candidates in discussions and questions on the future constitution and other important issues.

Civic Forum facilitators held the first candidate forum for Dili’s district candidates on August 18, where five district candidates participated in the 150-minute event held at the Becora Technical High School in Dili. Two women candidates who were judged by, in a small post-event informal survey, to be the candidates who showed themselves to be most able, dominated the forum, which proceeded in orderly and peaceful fashion. All the candidates expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to debate amongst their competitors, and noted the uniqueness of the forum that gave district level candidates an opportunity to speak and interact with each other. Participants, mostly CFET members, were likewise grateful for the opportunity to meet with the candidates. Representatives of

local print, radio and television media covered the event, which had an audience of about 100 people, with about 25 percent women. There were 17 questions asked from the audience, four by women. Civic Forum facilitators in Liquica moderated a second candidate forum on August 21. Six of the eight district candidates took part in the three-hour debate. 20 questions were asked from the audience, one by a woman.

The third candidate forum was organized in collaboration with the Pro-Democracy Students Movement (GMPD) and the Senate of Students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (Senate FISIPOL) on August 22. Nine of the 16 political parties and three of the five independent candidates participated in this national-level event, which was moderated by NGO, faculty and student group representatives. All three women independent candidates were present. The district level candidates were grateful for the opportunity to debate among their competitors, and the participants welcomed the opportunity to meet and interact with the candidates. GMPD and Senate FISIPOL members jointly moderated the event. TVTL, UNTAET radio and other media covered the event. About 150 young students attended the forum, less than 5 percent of which were women.

The fourth candidate forum was held jointly with the East Timorese Journalists Association (TLJA), Internews and local media in Maliana in the district of Bobonaro on August 24. Seven candidates took part in a tractable and orderly debate, which was well-covered by the local media, and recorded by Maliana Community Radio for re-broadcast. TLJA president Gil Guterres, who used rules and procedures developed by NDI for the earlier fora, moderated the Maliana forum. In particular, the rules strictly limited the time for questions and responses using timekeeping equipment and bell. Compared to a previous event organized by TLJA, this discipline on participants allowed a larger number of questions to be asked and equal time for all the parties to respond. The sole woman and local independent candidate had an important opportunity to air her views in a public forum. Audience members later reported that she was the most cogent and forceful debater.

Planned candidate forums in the districts of Aileu and Ermera had to be cancelled after the CFET facilitators in both districts, who were key to organizing and moderating these events, were identified as political party activists. A vital aspect of the effectiveness of Civic Forum is the political neutrality of its facilitators; the employment agreement directly prohibits any active activity or affiliation with a political party. As both facilitators had violated this agreement, they had to be expelled from the CFET program.

D. Coordination with other USAID grantees

NDI conducted weekly meetings with the International Republican Institute (IRI) and The Asian Foundation to discuss issues pertinent to the establishment of a code of conduct, future multi-party work, and the possibilities of sub-grant support for the activities of the NGO Forum. NDI also met with The Carter Center, and has kept in close contact with USAID and the US Mission. On May 3, NDI responded to an invitation by IRI to make a brief presentation at a political party training seminar in Baucau on NDI's activities in East Timor and the role of a political party code of conduct in elections.

PURPOSE AND POLICY-LEVEL IMPACT

I. Civic and Voter Education

With the initial training of Civic Forum facilitators, the formation of 227 discussion groups in several East Timorese districts, and the involvement of more than 3,000 participants, CFET has furthered the discussion of electoral processes and changes in East Timorese society. The first trained facilitators have stimulated the exchange of ideas within their respective districts, and have become identified as sources of information in their communities. Moreover, participants have recognized Civic Forum East Timor as a new and different methodology in civic education that gives them a genuine opportunity to speak and participate.

CFET has contributed to widespread information dissemination, awareness and discussion of basic democratic concepts in areas where forum groups are active. CFET has been used as a channel for the distribution of the Pact of National Unity as well as other civic education materials produced by UNTAET, UNDP, the Independent Electoral Commission, Yayasan HAK and The Asia Foundation. The distribution of these materials have also complemented broad efforts to promote a peaceful campaign, and to reassure East Timorese who feared that overt conflict would erupt during the campaign period and on election day. August 30 had a reported turnout of nearly 91 percent of registered voters, and the electoral process was observed to be free and peaceful.

Facilitators and discussion group participants have begun to acquire a better understanding of the basic premises of democracy and the role of democratic processes and institutions in the country's transition to independence. CFET members actively participated in candidate forums, asking questions on issues pertinent to the elections and the responsibilities of a constituent assembly. CFET members likewise took notes on party platforms and policies during political party rallies in their respective districts, and reported this information back to their discussion groups.

CFET discussions on constitutional development have instigated strong interest among forum members to discuss constitutional issues with their respective representatives to the newly elected Constituent Assembly. CFET facilitators have started a process of organizing consultation meetings between forum members and their elected representatives to talk about constitutional issues. Furthermore, in an effort to broaden active citizen participation in community decision-making, CFET facilitators are working with discussion group members to approach district representatives of the Constituent Assembly to request that they report back to the community on events in the newly elected body. These endeavors enable forum participants to know their representatives, communicate their views on the future constitution of East Timor, and work on developing a productive relationship between constituent and elected official.

II. Political Party Development and Leadership Development

NDI's work has helped East Timorese political parties actively participate in multi-party dialogue and public fora. NDI recognizes that many of the East Timorese political parties were recently formed, had few branches and little organizational structure; open and public political organization is a novel practice. Promoting and facilitating candidate forums gave political parties the opportunity to interact with their constituents and engage in constructive debate on issues of concern related to the formation of a new constitution. As very few forums were organized by UNTAET and other civic education organizations, NDI's work was significant to promoting public debate and to developing a sense of constituency between voters and candidates.

NDI's collaboration with academic and civil society groups in organizing candidate forums produced a more inclusive and encompassing debate. As previous events sponsored by these groups had limited the invitation and representation of political parties, NDI's involvement maintained the invitation of all parties and independent candidates to all of its forums, and introduced rules and regulations that gave candidates equal opportunity to speak and respond during the forums.

Discussions between NDI East Timor and several political parties and the distribution of translated materials furthered the discussion of the code of conduct on several levels. UNTAET Civic Education officials and political party members made use of the translated materials on sample codes of conduct as well as meetings with NDI staff to develop their own deliberations of a local code.

ANALYSIS OF IMPACT

Objective 1: To expand citizen knowledge and understanding of basic democratic concepts and encourage the development of an aware and active citizenship through participatory grassroots civic education

CFET has influenced the public discourse of electoral preparation and constitutional development, and has provided the East Timorese with a civic education structure that facilitates a greater degree of political participation and a more interactive approach towards awareness building. CFET has increased opportunities for participants to gain knowledge, skills and understanding of democratic values and the democratic political process. By promoting interaction between its participants and their elected representatives in the Constituent Assembly, CFET has contributed to the expansion of active citizen participation in community decision-making in East Timorese society, and has initiated important steps in building a productive relationship between elected representatives and the communities they represent.

It must be noted that while the number of districts covered by CFET during this period is less than outlined in the NDI proposal, the number of citizens reached exceeds the target set in the proposal. This impact is expected to double once the program is fully

operational in 13 districts from November 2001. At that time, with CFET present throughout the territory, NDI expects to help further disseminate materials and publications relevant to civic education.

NDI has worked to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of CFET. Among other challenges, the suspension of forum facilitators who were identified as political party activists stressed the importance of political impartiality in implementing program activity. For current and forthcoming recruiting and training of facilitators, the principle of political neutrality shall be further emphasized.

Based on the lessons learned from follow-up visits with CFET facilitators, the provision of technical assistance to discussion groups, and the monitoring of the progress of forum sessions, NDI will study how future facilitator training sessions shall be conducted.

Objective 2: To facilitate the active and informed participation of East Timorese political parties in multi-party dialogue in support of competitive peaceful elections, political tolerance, and a democratic electoral process

NDI's response to requests for information and technical assistance on the development of a code of conduct has helped advance the debate on the establishment of a code and its possible configurations. The materials translated and distributed by NDI contributed to the multi-level discussions on the code.

As the political context surrounding the development of a code of conduct shifted to the creation of the Pact of National Unity, NDI shaped its response to sustain its commitment to support peaceful elections. NDI's dissemination of copies of the Pact and pertinent civic education materials has supported efforts to transmit the aspiration contracted by the political parties to have a peaceful and violence-free election. This has helped the East Timorese restore confidence in peacefully exercising a democratic process.

In the implementation of candidate fora, NDI experienced certain problems. A technical difficulty NDI encountered was the expense involved in supporting candidate fora. NDI had originally proposed to complete 15 candidate forums based on seven political parties at an average cost of \$105 per forum. However, actual costs amounted to an average of \$700 per forum, involving the participation of 16 political parties and 5 independent candidates. Moreover, planned fora in Aileu and Ermera were cancelled after CFET facilitators in these areas had engaged in partisan political activities and were expelled from the program. NDI shall take these difficulties into account in developing future program activities of parallel nature.

NDI's work with East Timorese political parties through multi-level discussions and the promotion of candidate forums has empowered political parties with the opportunity to actively participate in multi-party dialogue and to productively interact with their constituents. NDI has worked to provide an impartial and even-handed approach to its engagement with political parties by upholding standards of fairness and equal opportunity. This approach has fostered the development of criteria in conducting symposia and fora of

this nature. The public appearance and participation of political parties in an orderly public forum has likewise increased public confidence in the multi-party political system. By facilitating such interaction, NDI has helped candidates who were ultimately elected to better understand their communities' concerns, thus increasing the capacity of political parties in the constitutional and electoral design processes.

APPENDICES

Appendix I
NDI Civic Forum Discussion Module 1
Rule Setting, Elements of Democracy
and Individual Rights

NDI - Civic Forum in East Timor

Discussion Module - 1

Topics: Rule Setting, Elements of Democracy and Individual Rights

Time: 120 minutes

Be sure to:

- Make sure the room is set up to facilitate a participatory discussion
- Introduce yourselves
- Ask the participants to do the same
- Introduce NDI-basic facts only
- Give a verbal agenda and length of the meeting
- Set goals
- Clarify your role as a facilitator

NDI CIVIC FORUM: Program Objectives

Through regularly scheduled community discussions and distribution of printed materials, the NDI civic Forum program is designed to assist the East Timorese citizens in understanding democracy and the East Timor transition process. The practical information and experience-gained by participating in the discussions and by receiving materials- will help program participants and others exercise their rights as citizens and play active role in the democratic development of their society.

Purpose of discussion:

The discussion should help the group members establish rules that will encourage the full and active participation of each group member in the discussion. The rules should limit the possibility of group domination and autocratic tendencies by participants. Additionally, the session should help the group members recognise the relationship between participatory processes and democracy. The group members will understand the elements of democracy and their individual rights.

NDI Civic Forum in East Timor's facilitator's guidelines for democratic discussions:

- Use local language for discussion groups
- Everyone is clear on the topic
- Everyone participates; no one dominates the discussion - No speeches!
- One person talks at a time
- Comments and discussion stay on the topic
- Avoid having the same idea repeated constantly

- Comments should be to the whole group - no side discussions
- Respect time limits
- Write down unanswered questions
- No divisive or confrontational language or tone
- Use flip chart
- Take notes of discussion, comments and observations so that you can write report

1. Introduction (10minutes)

Reaffirm points of the meeting

Welcome people

Introduce yourself

Get members introduce themselves

Explain the program objective (as stated above)

Introduce today's topic; give verbal agenda and set 120 minute timeline

2. Setting rules (20 minutes)

Before the participants begin dealing with issues and ideas the participants should agree on a set of rules that define how a group will function and how the participants will interact. In order to promote a democratic environment, the rules should be based on freedom and equality – freedom of speech and expression and equality of opportunity to participate

Ask Sample questions

What happens if we all talk at once?

Should I give a lecture?

Are different opinions important? Why?

Sample rules

Each group member has the right to participate.

The opinion of each group member is important and should be respected.

Group members should be tolerant of different ideas.

Each group member is important.

One person speak at a time

3. Elements of Democracy: (40 min)

Ask participants what is democracy?

Write down summary of their comments on the flip chart.

Paraphrase possible answers (if they have missed some of these points you should add those; participants can mention other points also) – “democracy means people have power”; “it is a system of government through which citizens communicate their opinion and wishes to the government”; “a system in which people elect their government through elections”; “ensure rule of law where law is supreme and everyone is equal under law”; “it is a government form of government that guarantees fundamental rights of citizens”.

Ask participants what are the elements of democracy? (*What features distinguish democracy from other forms of government?*). Write their comments on the flip chart.

Paraphrase: (add any point participants miss. They could add more points)

- Citizens participate in choosing their government through election / peaceful transfer of power.
- More than one political party is present (multi party system)
- Government is transparent and accountable
- Presence of an active civil society
- Independent Judiciary (free of Government and Parliament to protect citizens rights)
- Rule of Law (law above all; everybody equal under law)
- Free Press and electronic media
- Fundamental rights protected by government (right to life, property, work, speech, association choose religion; etc.)

4. Individual Rights: (40 min.)

Democracies are established on the belief that all individuals have basic human rights that are granted by God. The creator has endowed people with these rights. These rights are inalienable and include the right to life, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, freedom of assembly and association, the right to fair trial, the right to petition government, and the right to vote.

Ask participants the following questions, one at a time: List answers in flip chart-

Will everyone exercise their right to vote in the upcoming election? Why?

What other rights do they possess? Why?

Who gives you these fundamental human rights?

Ask - What does a society that protects human rights and values should look like?

Mutual respect and compromise, minority rights, tolerance, respect for law, equality before law, free press, political, social and economic pluralism, free and fair election, active participation of citizenry, government based upon will of the people.

Ask - How can these rights be guaranteed?

Through civic participation with citizens asserting their rights; transparent government;

independent judiciary; through constitutional framework; limiting the power of government.

5. Conclusion / Close: (10 mins.)

Summarize the session:

- Read out the rules framed by the group from flip chart.
- Review the discussion on what is democracy and elements of democracy from flip charts
- That individual rights are intrinsic (review list of rights put up by the group)
- That rights are best protected by active and involved citizens.

Before you go – Choose by consensus a coordinator for the group with whom you can keep contact to coordinate group activities. Confirm next meeting time, location, hand out any materials you have brought, clean the room.

Appendix II
NDI Civic Forum Discussion Module 2
Democratic Elections in East Timor

NDI - Civic Forum in East Timor

Discussion Module - 2 **Topics: Democratic elections in East Timor** **Time: 120 minutes**

Be sure to:

- Make sure the room is set up to facilitate a participatory discussion
- Introduce yourselves
- Ask the participants to do the same
- Introduce NDI-basic facts only
- Give a verbal agenda and length of the meeting
- Set goals
- Clarify your role as a facilitator
- Conduct session evaluation by participants at the end

1. Introduction (20 minutes)

- a. Welcome everyone including new members, if any
- b. Introduce yourselves
- c. Get members introduce themselves
- d. Explain the program objective:

NDI CIVIC FORUM: Program Objectives

Through regularly scheduled community discussions and distribution of printed materials, the NDI civic Forum program is designed to assist the East Timorese citizens in understanding democracy and the East Timor transition process. The practical information and experience-gained by participating in the discussions and by receiving materials- will help program participants and others exercise their rights as citizens and play active role in the democratic development of their society.

- e. Reaffirm points of the last meeting (rule setting, elements of democracy, and individual rights)
- f. Introduce today's topic; give verbal agenda and set 120 minute timeline

Purpose of discussion:

The discussion should help the group members understand *what is democratic election; what is free and fair election that will encourage active participation of group members in the upcoming elections scheduled for August 30, 2001. Additionally, the participants will know the voting and counting process of the election. The group members will understand the issues involved in the upcoming elections and what the elected representatives are expected to do after the elections.*

Time frame:

1. Introduction – 20 minutes
2. Democratic Elections – 40 minutes
3. August 30 elections – 40 minutes
4. Conclusions – 20 minutes

NDI Civic Forum in East Timor's facilitator's guidelines for democratic discussions:

- Use local language for discussion groups
- Everyone is clear on the topic
- Everyone participates; no one dominates the discussion – No speeches!
- One person talks at a time
- Comments and discussion stay on the topic
- Avoid having the same idea repeated constantly
- Comments should be to the whole group – no side discussions
- Respect time limits
- Write down unanswered questions
- No divisive or confrontational language or tone
- Use flip chart
- Take notes of discussion, comments and observations so that you can write report

2. What is democratic election? (40 minutes)

Ask participants – *why are there elections in a democracy?*

In a democracy, the authority of the government comes from those governed – the people. The mechanism for giving that consent for governmental authority is by holding free and fair elections. The word “election” means “to choose”. It gives citizens the opportunity to choose their representatives. An election is the act by which people vote for the political party and leaders they want in government.

Ask participants – *what is democratic elections?* (List on a flip chart)

All modern democracies hold elections, but not all elections are democratic. In some cases elections are held to give a sense of legitimacy to a single-party governments. In others, several candidates may be presented, but intimidation and vote rigging is used to ensure the victory of particular candidate. These elections are not democratic.

Paraphrase and summarize thus (participants can mention additional points, you should add any points they miss):

* Democratic elections are competitive. The rules and conduct of elections must be fair. This means that all parties must have the same freedom of speech, assembly and movement necessary to articulate their criticisms and to present alternative policies and candidates to the voters.

* Democratic elections are inclusive. The definition of who qualifies as candidate and voter must include a large proportion of the adult population. As government chosen by small exclusive group is not a democracy, even if its method appear democratic. One of the historical and continuing struggles in democracies is the efforts of excluded groups,

whether ethnic or religious minorities or women to gain full citizenship and the right to vote and hold elected office.

* Democratic elections are *periodic*. Elected officials are accountable to the people and they must submit themselves to be voted at prescribed times. Democracies do not elect representatives for life. This means elected representatives must accept the risk of being voted out of office.

* Democratic elections are *definitive*. Subject to the laws and constitution of a country, democratically elected representatives have the authority to govern. Elections determine leadership of the country.

Ask participants – *what democratic elections mean to you? Use flip chart.*

- The electorate must be free and must believe that it is free to make political choices, without intimidation, bribery, or fear of retribution for their vote
- The electorate must be adequately informed about the electoral contestants in order to make a genuine choice
- The electorate must believe that its choice will be accurately recorded and respected.
- Citizens must believe that they are free to exercise their political expressions, associations, assembly and movement to assist those they support for political office
- Those seeking to compete for political power must be free to associate into political parties and to gain access to the ballot without political discrimination

Ask participants – *how you as citizens can participate in the elections? Use flip chart.*

as candidates representing political parties or as independents (but that time is now over)
as voters
campaign for political parties and candidates
as polling agents for parties and candidates
as domestic election observers

3. Information on August 30, 2001 Election: (40 min)

You may know that the government of East Timor is currently run by the United Nations. It will elect a Constituent Assembly to adopt a constitution for East Timor. Until now, East Timor does not have a constitution and this will be for the first time that East Timor will have a constitution to run its affairs as an independent country. A constitution is a set of rules framed to run a government.

Here are some frequently asked questions about the August 30 elections: (handouts to be distributed at the end of the discussion)

Ask participants –
when will the elections be held?

- The election to the Constituent Assembly will be held on August 30, 2001

how many members will be there in the Constituent Assembly and what is the system of election?

- Total of 88 members will be elected to the Constituent Assembly
- Of the 88 members 13 members will be elected, one from each district
- 13 district representatives will be elected on the basis of whoever gets most votes
- 75 members will be elected on the basis of proportional representation, meaning that you will vote for a political party or independent groups and whichever party/groups gets more votes will get more seats. If a party gets 20% votes it will get 20% (15 of the 75) seats

can political parties and independent candidates run the elections?

- Independent candidates can also run elections from district and national seats
- Political parties and independent candidates will however have to register with the Independent Election Commission to qualify to contest

how many political parties and independents candidates are contesting the election?

- 16 political parties and 5 independent candidates are contesting 75 national seats.
- Some political parties are fielding candidates for district representatives and independent candidates are also contesting for district seats.

who will administer the elections?

- the Independent Election Commission (IEC) will administer the elections.
- There will be district offices of the IEC in each district and you could go and ask them about any election related issues including where you have to vote on the election day

who can vote in this election?

- any East Timorese citizen of 17 years or more who have registered under UN civil registration will be able to vote

can anyone know who you have voted for?

- no the vote is secret and only you and God will know where you have voted

where will you vote?

- you will have a designated polling centre and station where you will vote. The IEC can tell you about your place of voting

how many ballot papers will be given to each voter?

- each eligible voter will be given two ballot papers, one for district representatives and the other for national representative. After voting they will put the two ballot papers in two different ballot boxes.

where will the vote be counted?

- votes for district representatives will be counted at the district headquarter and those for the national representatives will be counted in Dili so that it is not possible to find out for whom one has voted

when will the results of the election be out?

- the results of the elections will be out progressively and full results will be available by 10 September, 2001.

Ask participants the following question- *Have you met any candidates yet? Would you like to meet any candidates before the elections?*

Discuss about candidate forum and encourage them to organize one.

Ask participants - What will the Constituent Assembly do?

The Constituent Assembly will frame a constitution for East Timor within 90 days. More than two thirds of the members of the Constituent Assembly will have to support such a constitution. Once the constitution is adopted East Timor is expected to officially declare its independence on January 31, 2002. After framing the constitution the Constituent Assembly may convert itself into a legislature. After elections your responsibilities are not over as you will have to interact with him/her on the issue of framing a constitution for your country.

4. Conclusion / Close: (20 mins.)

Summarize the session:

- Read out the points from flip charts.
- Review the discussion on what is democratic elections and what it means to citizens from flip charts
- The frequently asked questions on election on election
- If there is a need for organizing candidate forum?
- The role of the Constituent Assembly.
- Conduct an evaluation of the session by participants asking them what learnt from today's session and how they will use the information

Before you go –If participants express interest to organize Candidate's Forum assist them actively. Confirm next meeting time, location, hand out materials you have brought for the members, clean the room.

Appendix III
NDI Civic Forum Discussion Module 3
Constitution of East Timor

NDI - Civic Forum in East Timor

Discussion Module - 3

Topics: CONSTITUTION OF EAST TIMOR

Time: 120 minutes

Facilitators - Be sure to:

- Make sure the room is set up to facilitate a participatory discussion
- Introduce yourselves
- Ask the participants to do the same
- Give a verbal agenda and length of the meeting
- Set goals
- Clarify your role as a facilitator
- Conduct session evaluation by participants at the end

1. Introduction (15 minutes)

- a. Welcome everyone including new members, if any
- b. Explain the program objective as under:

NDI CIVIC FORUM: Program Objectives:

Say - **Through regularly scheduled community discussions and distribution of printed materials, the NDI civic Forum program is designed to assist the East Timorese citizens in understanding democracy and the East Timor transition process. The practical information and experience-gained by participating in the discussions and by receiving materials- will help program participants and others exercise their rights as citizens and play active role in the democratic development of their society.**

Ask participants if they clearly understand the program objectives. If not please explain so that everyone is clear about the objectives.

- c. Reaffirm points of the last meeting (**what is democratic elections, what it means to you, how can citizens participate in election, information on August 30 election and the constituent assembly**)

- d. *Explain the purpose of the discussion:* **Purpose of discussion:**

Say – *At the end of today's discussion you will know:*

1. *The group member's perception of the August 30 election*
2. *What is a constitution and constitutional government;*
3. *What are the essential elements of a constitution;*
4. *How are constitutions enacted;*
5. *Status of the constitution making process in East Timor and*
6. *The role citizens can play in the process of framing a constitution (an activity)*

g. Time frame:

Introduce today's topic; give verbal agenda and set 120-minute timeline

1. Introduction – 15 minutes
2. People's perception of August 30 elections – 20 minutes
3. What is a Constitution? What is constitutional government? – 20 minutes

4. What are the essential elements of a constitution? – 20 minutes
5. How are constitutions enacted? – 15 minutes
6. Status of constitution making in East Timor – 15 minutes
7. Conclusions – 15 minutes

NDI Civic Forum in East Timor's facilitator's guidelines for democratic discussions:

- Use local language for discussion groups
- Everyone is clear on the topic
- Everyone participates; no one dominates the discussion – No speeches!
- One person talks at a time
- Comments and discussion stay on the topic
- Avoid having the same idea repeated constantly
- Comments should be to the whole group – no side discussions
- Respect time limits
- Write down unanswered questions
- No divisive or confrontational language or tone
- Use flip chart
- Take notes of discussion, comments and observations so that you can write report

2. What is the group members' perception of the August 30 election? (20 minutes)

Ask the following questions and fill up the checklist at the end of this module, one for each group:

- a. Did you go to vote on August 30?
- b. Were you able to vote freely for candidates of your choice?
- c. Did polling officials conduct the polls neutrally and efficiently?
- d. Do you think the election was free and fair?

3. Ask participants – *what is a constitution?* (List answers on a flip chart)

Hear the participants and then paraphrase and summarize thus:

SAY – When a number of people come together as a group it must have rules and regulations to regulate their conduct, to live in harmony. Constitution is the foundation of any group, organization, society or country. Like the civic forum discussion groups have their own rules to guide their discussions every country has a constitution that legitimates, limits and gives power to the government. It is the supreme law of the land; all other laws are subordinate to it. It is a framework for a government. It tells how a government is formed and run and how people in the government are recruited or elected. Constitutions can be written like US, Australia and Indonesia or unwritten like Great Britain.

Ask participants – What is a constitutional government?

Hear participants and paraphrase and summarize thus:

SAY - 1. Having a constitution does not always mean that a nation has a constitutional government. A nation has a constitutional government when the powers of the person or group of persons are limited. For example the executive head of the government (President or Prime Minister) is not given powers to make laws that is done by the legislature or to

interpret laws that is done by the judiciary. The head of the executive only executes the laws passed by the legislature. This is also known as separation of power.

2. These limits of the government's power are part of the constitution. In Constitutional government, the people running the government must obey the limits.

3. Suppose the constitution of a nation does not limit the powers of its government or if the limits are not enforced then such a government is not constitutional government. Such a government of unlimited power is called autocratic or dictatorial government.

4. Ask participants – **What are the essential elements of a constitution?** *Use flip charts.*
Hear participants and then paraphrase and summarize thus:

SAY – **A democratic constitution should contain the following at least:**

1. **Set up government structures (legislative, judicial and executive)**
2. **Distribute power among these branches** (law making, interpretation of laws and execution of laws to the 3 branches of government respectively)
3. **Limit power of government officials** (unlimited power leads to tyranny)
4. **Guarantee human rights that can not be abused by state or other citizens**
5. **Establish process of electing, appointing and replacing elected officials** (set up an electoral system to ensure competitive, inclusive, periodic and definitive democratic elections, set up independent Election Commission)
6. **Define how constitution itself can be changed** (rigid or flexible)

5. Ask participants – **how is a constitution enacted?** *Use flip chart.*

Hear from participants and then paraphrase and summarize thus:

SAY – Constitutions are enacted by the following ways or a combination of these: **1.** A constitutional body or group of people or group of people given the responsibility such as a Constitutional Commission; **2.** Referendum or vote of the people; **3.** The parliament or a constituent assembly passes it.

6. Status of the constitution of East Timor -

Ask participants – **does east Timor have a constitution now?**

- do you know what is the status of the constitution of East Timor?

After hearing from the participants summarize thus:

- SAY – **East Timor does not have a constitution now. It is run by rules framed by United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).**
- **The August 30 election was held to elect an 88-member constituent assembly to write a constitution for East Timor within 90 days of its first meeting.**
- **UNTAET had organized a series of public consultation on the constitution during June – July 2001 and will summarize their finding and hand it over to the constituent assembly for consideration.**
- **At least 60 out of 88 members of the constituent assembly must pass the constitution.**
- **The constitution will come into force on the date of independence of East Timor on January 31, 2002 or earlier if approved by UNTEAT, SRSG.**

7. Ask participants – **how you as citizens can participate in the constitution making process?**

SAY - **Although the constitution commission has conducted a series of public consultation on the future constitution of East Timor there is still opportunity to influence the constitution making process because the constituent assembly elected in August election will**

now write the constitution.

SAY – Now that you know what a constitution is and what it should contain you may discuss with your elected representative to the Constituent Assembly and tell him/her what you want in your constitution. You can do it by handing your representative a written paper incorporating your demands or can meet him to discuss what you want in your constitution.

- **Encourage the group members to meet their elected representatives to discuss constitutional issues. Your success as facilitator will depend on how many of your groups meet and interact with elected representatives. Assure them all your help in the process of writing a petition or contacting their elected representative.**

SAY – Your role as citizens in a democracy does not finish with casting your vote. You have to actively participate in the democratic process to ensure that your government remains a democratic. In absence of citizens' oversight many governments have become dictatorial or autocratic.

Ask them to find out from the Independent Election Commission who (name and party name) has been elected as their representative. If they do not know tell them.

8. Conclusion / Close: (20 mins.)

Summarize the session:

- Read out the points from flip charts.
- Review the discussion on what is constitution and what is a constitutional government?
- The essential elements of a democratic constitution.
- How are constitutions enacted?
- The role of citizens in framing a constitution.
- Conduct an evaluation of the session by participants asking them what learnt from today's session and how they will use the information. Encourage them again to meet their elected representatives to discussing the constitution of East Timor.

Before you go –If participants express interest to meet their elected representative assist them actively. Confirm next meeting time, location, hand out materials you have brought for the members, clean the room.

Appendix IV

How To Organize A Candidate Forum

NDI – CIVIC FORUM IN EAST TIMOR

How to Organize
CANDIDATE FORUM

The goal of Civic Forum (CF) is to purposefully move citizens to political action - to make them active participants in the political process. Elections offer citizens an opportunity to engage in the political process in different roles as candidates, voters, campaigners, observers etc. Largest segment of the population being voters. Through campaign activities and by engaging in dialogues with candidates voters can know the policies and programs of candidates on the basis of which they can decide who to vote for. Thus NDI-CFET program having begun its activities in 7 districts would encourage its group members to organize candidate forum so that they are able to obtain more information from the candidates contesting this election. This will enable them to make informed choice and vote judiciously during the August 30 elections.

What is a Candidate Forum?

It is a forum where candidates representing political parties and independent candidates are brought together to meet and interact with citizens groups like the CF group members. In such a forum ALL or MAJOR candidates must be present.

Purpose of Candidate Forum:

The purpose of organizing Candidate forum is to facilitate interaction between candidates and CF group members so that they can make informed and judicious choice. This will also introduce the CF members to their future elected representatives and enable them to cultivate an on-going relationship.

How to organize a Candidate forum?

Step –1: Ask CF group members if they have met any candidate contesting the August 30, 2001 elections yet and if they are interested to meet some candidates before election to know what they intend to do for citizens if they are elected. This interaction will help them decide who to vote for during the upcoming elections as they will have more information on the policies and programs of different political parties / candidates and can make informed choices. Enthuse and encourage group members to organize candidate forum, at least one in each district, more if possible.

Step – 2: Contact the political parties and ALL candidates in your district and tell them about CF program in your district. Tell them that the CF members are interested in meeting the candidates contesting the August 30 election to know more about their policies and programs so that they can decide whom to vote for in the upcoming election.

List of district candidates and contact details can be found at the IEC office in your district. You can also contact party representatives directly through district offices.

Step – 3: Fix a date, time and venue to hold the meeting between candidates and CF group members. While fixing the date you should keep adequate time to prepare for the event where all CF members can assemble. The venue should be large enough to accommodate all CF members in your district and be at a convenient location so that it is easy for the CF group members to come to the meeting. The time should be preferably in the morning hours so that CF members traveling to the meeting from a distance should be able to get back home safely.

Step – 4: Make logistical arrangement for the meeting. Identify and prepare the venue for the meeting. You will need flip charts, markers, chairs, tables, microphones etc. Transportation of CF group members for coming to the meeting and returning home should be organized. Formal invitations to candidates may be necessary.

Step – 5: Budget - You should prepare a budget for the event and have it approved by NDI before you start spending any money. The budget should include rental (if any) for the venue and transportation cost for CF group members. Individual members will not be paid transportation cost but bus/truck should be hired to bring CF members to the meeting. Chairs, tables, etc should be taken on voluntary contribution from the community.

Agenda for the candidate forum: The candidate forum will have the following agenda:

1. Introduction of candidates and political parties – 10 minutes
2. Introduction of CF – 10 minutes
3. Brief speech by each candidate (5 – 10 minutes each) as per guideline – 60 min
4. Position of candidates on constitutional issues – 30 min
5. Questions by CF members and answers – 30 min

Time: 2 hours 20 minutes.

Moderator: Select one CF member as moderator to moderate the meeting. The moderator should be non-partisan. CF facilitators will assist the moderators to conduct the meeting. The moderator will have to be briefed properly by the facilitator. It will be good to involve him/her from the organizing phase.

Discussion rules: Each candidate will have 5 – 10 minutes to speak depending on the number of candidates present. The candidates will speak on their political, social and economic policies. They will NOT criticize any other party or candidate or use any provocative language. If any candidate violates discussion rules the moderator will remind the candidate about discussion rules and request him to follow the discussion rules.

Candidates can distribute their campaign materials/ leaflets to CF members at the meeting.

Position of Candidates on Constitutional issues: Ask these questions to each candidate and write their answers on a flip chart. If elected to the Constituent Assembly:

- What form of government would you establish?
(Presidential, Parliamentary, mixed types)
- Would you guarantee fundamental rights and human rights as per Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the constitution?
(right to life, property, equality before law, non discrimination, freedom of speech, association, movement, press, association etc)

- Would you establish the principles of separation of power and checks and balances? (power distributed among 3 organs – executive, legislature and judiciary – no organ enjoys all power. Power given to 3 organs are balanced. No organ has power to dominate other organs)
- Would you establish an independent judiciary? Rule of law? (free from the executive and has power to manage conflicts over interpretation, application, enforcement and protect citizens for governmental excesses)
- Would you establish an independent Election Authority to conduct periodic elections? (an independent authority to conduct periodic, free, fair and meaningful elections)
- Would you establish strong representative local government? (power decentralized to representative local government)
- What would you support to be the national language of East Timor? (Tetun, Basaha Indonesia, Portugese etc.)

Note of Caution: Candidate forum is a very sensitive event. The CF facilitators and moderators has to carefully use words and conduct the meeting so that non-partisanship is reflected. The words and actions of the CF facilitators and Moderator must not reflect any partisan tilt. Thus it is very important that the moderator is non-partisan, is briefed adequately and is aware of the sensitivities of the event.

Other important points:

1. CF group coordinators and members should be involved at all stage of organizing the forum so that they learn how to organize an event;
2. A CF group member should be trained to moderate the discussions with assistance from facilitators;
3. No candidate forum will be held with one political party or candidate only. Efforts should be made to have at least one candidate from each political party. They could be from the national list or district list of candidates.
4. Candidate forum will be organized with the approval of NDI, Dili.
5. Candidate forum should be organized with the consent and involvement of the community leaders where it will be held.
6. Civpol must be informed of the event well in advance.

NDI, Dili, East Timor: 24 July 2001

Appendix V

Civic Forum in East Timor Handout on the Constitution

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE (NDI)
CFET - HANDOUT : CONSTITUTION

What is a constitution?

When a number of people come together as a group it must have rules and regulations to regulate their conduct, to live in harmony. Constitution is the foundation of any group,

organization, society or country. Like the civic forum discussion groups have their own rules to guide their discussions every country has a constitution that legitimates, limits and gives power to the government. It is the supreme law of the land; all other laws are subordinate to it. It is a framework for a government. It tells how the government is formed and run and how people in the government are recruited or elected. Constitutions can be written like the US, Australia and Indonesia or unwritten like Great Britain.

What is a constitutional government?

Having a constitution does not always mean that a nation has a constitutional government. A nation has a constitutional government when the powers of the person or group of persons running the government are limited. For example, the executive head of the government (President or prime Minister) is not given the powers to make laws that are done by the legislature or to interpret laws that are done by the Judiciary. The head of the executive branch only execute laws passed by the legislature. In the event of abuse of any law by the executive the judiciary protects the citizens.

These limits of the government's power are part of the constitution. In a constitutional government, the people running the government must obey the limits. If these limits on power do not exist or are not enforced then it cannot be called a constitutional government. Such a government of unlimited power is called an autocratic or dictatorial government.

What are the essential elements of a constitution?

A democratic constitution should contain the following at least:

- Set up of government structures (legislative, executive and judicial)
- Distribute power among these 3 branches (law making, interpretation of laws and execution of laws to the 3 branches of government respectively)
- Limit power of government officials as unlimited power leads to tyranny. (government must give persons accused of crime a fair trial; government cannot take private property without compensation)
- Guarantee human rights that can not be abused by state or other citizens
- Establish process of electing, appointing and replacing elected officials (set up an electoral system to ensure competitive, inclusive, periodic and definitive democratic elections, set up independent Election Commission)
- Define how constitution itself can be changed (rigid or flexible)

How can government's power be limited?

Political philosophers knew that throughout history, many governments had used their power unfairly. They were afraid that governments may abuse their power because love for power and love for money are two strong human passions that profoundly influence men. Moreover, by the nature of human beings in power there is a natural tendency to increase it whenever they can. Thus it became important to limit powers of governments. Constitutional governments are designed in a manner that one group cannot dominate the government. Two ways of organizing government to prevent abuse of power are called *separation of powers* and *checks and balances*.

Separation of Powers: According to this principal all the powers of a government are not given to one group of people or one branch of government rather all the powers of the government are divided and given to the 3 branches, the legislature, the judiciary and the executive.

- A legislative branch has the power to make laws
- An executive branch has the power to carry out and enforce laws
- A judicial branch has the power to manage conflicts over interpretation, application and enforcement of laws.

Checks and balances: This means that the powers given to the different branches of government are balanced. No one branch has so much power to dominate the others. Also each branch has special powers but these are checked because they are shared with other groups. In the US constitution for example, the power to make laws belong to the Congress which is the legislative branch. This power is divided between the House of Representative and the Senate. Each can check the power of the other by refusing to pass a law proposed by the other house.

In addition the executive and judicial branches have the power to check and control the law making power of the Congress. For example, the President must sign bills passed by the Congress before they become a law and the President can refuse to sign it (veto). If this happens, both houses of the Congress have to pass that bill with two-thirds majority for it to become a law. The Supreme Court can invalidate a law passed by the Congress if it violates the constitution. This way the powers of the President and Judiciary are also checked.

The complicated system of separation of powers and checks and balances helps ensure that the governmental power is limited. Constitutional governments being a complicated system it takes time to get things done but many people think that when a decision is finally made it is likely to be a good decision.

What can citizens do in the constitution making process?

The 88 - member Constituent Assembly elected in the recent election will write the first constitution of East Timor. Sixty members of the Assembly will have to vote for passing the constitution. As citizens you can meet your elected representative and tell him/her what you want incorporated your constitution. You could write what you want in your constitution and hand over a petition to your elected representative and urge him to ensure that East Timor has a democratic constitution and a constitutional government too.

Appendix VI
Tips for organizing meetings
between Civic Forum members
and Constituent Assembly members
to discuss constitutional issues

NDI - CIVIC FORUM IN EAST TIMOR

**Tips for organizing meetings
between Civic Forum members and Constituent Assembly members
to discuss constitutional issues.**

This is a guide to assist you, as facilitators of NDI - Civic Forum (CF), to organize meetings between CF members of your district and member(s) of the Constituent Assembly (CA) to discuss the concerns and ideas of CF members on constitutional issues.

Background: During the month of September 2001 the CF discussion module focused on the constitution particularly on the future constitution of East Timor. An 88 member CA elected on August 30 is tasked to write the first constitution of East Timor. A constitution is a crucial document for any country. It is the highest law of the land that governs, among others, the relationship between the citizens and those that will govern and protect them, guarantee their rights and ensure a democratic political system. Although the CA is tasked to write the constitution by 15 December 2001 it is essential that citizens of East Timor participate actively in communicating their opinion on constitutional issues to their elected representatives and through other channels.

Based on our discussion module on the constitution CF members have evinced keen interest in meeting their elected representatives to discuss the future constitution of the country. As facilitators you must assist them to meet their elected representatives not only to discuss constitutional issues but also to develop an on-going relationship between our members and their elected representatives. We must remember that the goal of the CF program is to increase citizens' participation in the democratic political process.

Objectives of the meeting:

1. To meet elected representative and facilitate them on their election;
2. To discuss issues of concern regarding the future constitution of East Timor which must be democratic;
3. To develop an on-going relationship with the elected representative so that CF members are able to meet their representative periodically and in times of their need.

Organizing a meeting: If all or some of your groups have expressed interest you may consider taking the following steps:

Step – 1: You should meet the elected representative with some (at least 4/5) group members and congratulate the representative on being elected. *Remember, all members may not have voted for the representative but once elected s/he is everyone's representative whether one may have voted for him/her or not.* Congratulate your representative and tell him/her about the NDI - CF program in your district. Tell your representative that the CF members would like to discuss constitutional issues with him/her. Request him for a meeting with CF members. Get a date and time convenient to him/her and to CF members for the meeting. Fix a convenient venue for the meeting – it could be a school, a community hall, a church or even an open space – that is close to where the CF members live. Remember, your representative is a busy person! Make sure the date, time and venue is convenient to CF members.

Step – 2: Inform all group leaders and members about the date, time and venue of the meeting. *Make sure that all CF members attend the event.* Involve at least 4/5 groups in each meeting. *Involve the group leaders and other interested members in organizing the event – please do not*

try to do it by yourselves – it is important that CF members learn to organize similar events themselves in future.

Step – 3: Draw up an agenda for the meeting. It may be as under:

- Let a CF member moderate the meeting. Train him/her well for the role;
- Welcome the representative, thank him for coming to the meeting and congratulate him/her on being elected as their representative. Let a CF member do this. Train him/her well for the job.
- Another CF member should introduce NDI and the CF program;
- Yet another CF member should state what they would like to see incorporated in their constitution (the 5 essential elements of a democratic constitution; the principles of separation of power and checks and balances etc.)
- Open the floor for participation of all members for 30 – 45 minutes;
- Request the representative to respond to the issues and concerns raised by the CF members.
- Finally, before ending the meeting, thank the representative again for coming to the meeting, listening/responding to their concerns and request him for periodic meetings in the future.

Step – 4: The facilitators will make a report on each meeting. You have to take notes during the meeting to do this. How many members were present, what were the issues raised, what were the responses from the representative, if the representative agreed to meet the CF members in future, what went well, what did not go well etc. should be incorporated in the report.

Important notes: *You should encourage community participation in organizing the event.* The Representatives should be taken close to the place where CF members live so that no transportation cost is involved. The venue should be free of charges if you select a school or a church or even an open space under a tree. Members should be asked to bring in chairs if the venue does not have chairs and tables. However, if you fail to involve the community in organizing the event than contact NDI for help. Do not organize a meeting if you cannot involve and bring CF members to participate in it. Keep NDI – Dili informed of the event at all stages.

For any clarification or help contact NDI – Dili office.

Appendix VII

Pact of National Unity

PACT OF NATIONAL UNITY

Convinced of the need to create and maintain an atmosphere of peace and stability as primary grounds for the sustainable development of East Timor;

Taking into consideration the principles consecrated in the Magna Carta approved at the First National Convention of East Timor, which took place in 1998, in Peniche, Portugal;

Conscious of the need to assure an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust;

The representatives of the political parties signing this Pact have reached a consensus to:

1. Accept, unconditionally, the results of the popular consultation on August 30th 1999, as an expression of the unequivocal will of the East Timorese people to attain their independence;
2. Respect the results of the elections for the Constituent Assembly, to take place on August 30th 2001, pursuant to the electoral Legislation in force;
3. Defend the principles of Non-Violence by fostering dialogue, a culture of tolerance and mutual respect, and observe the principles of good citizenship and social conviviality;
4. Disseminate the practice of non-violence in the relations between political parties, requesting the members and the supporters of the political parties and the population not to resort to physical or verbal aggression, instead promoting the accomplishment of a peaceful and orderly election campaigns;
5. Defend a multi-party democracy, respecting the rights of all legally established parties;
6. Defend Peace and stability, by means of a process of national reconciliation based on Justice and the respect for Human Dignity;

7. Defend the integrity of the national territory in all of its components;
8. Promote National Unity searching for concrete solutions in favour of social and economic development and aiming at fulfilling the material and spiritual needs of the East Timorese people;
9. Promote Equality of Rights and the principles of non-discrimination and non-exclusion, specifically with regards to place of residence, economic and social status, political choice options, religion and gender, in order to build a broad consensus and grounds for understanding;
10. Promote the principles of social solidarity, with particular emphasis towards the most vulnerable groups, such as widows, orphans, the disabled, those injured in wars and members of the Resistance;
11. Reject funds coming from foreign countries, associations, groups and individuals that are contrary to the independence of East Timor.
12. Recognize the East Timor Defence Force (Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste - FDTL), established by UNTAET, as the embryonic for the future national Armed Force;
13. Defend the Constitution to be approved by the Constituent Assembly to be elected on August 30th 2001;
14. Have reached a consensus so that as many people as possible will be aware of the Pact of National Unity;

This Pact of National Unity shall be in force from the date signed by the leaders of the undersigned political parties until the promulgation of the Constitution of East Timor

Dili, July 8th 2001